

## Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 FMC-01 DOTE-00

EURE-00 /085 W

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P R 221810Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5762

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

USNMR SHAPE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, UK

SUBJECT: SEAMEN STRIKE SETTLED BUT RAISES PROBLEMS FOR  
OTHER INDUSTRIES

1. BY A RELATIVELY NARROW VOTE, 9 - 7, THE NATIONAL  
UNION OF SEAMEN'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAS DECIDED TODAY  
(SEPTEMBER 22) TO ACCEPT A FRINGE-BENEFIT PACKAGE  
NEGOTIATED BY NUS LEADERS AND THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF  
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BRITISH SHIPPING. THE EXECUTIVE'S VOTE ON THE PACKAGE

CAME AFTER 22 HOURS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND MEANS THAT THE STRIKE CALL FOR SATURDAY (SEPTEMBER 26) AT MIDNIGHT IS NOW RESCINDED.

2. THE DETAILS OF THE OFFER HAVE NOT YET BEEN MADE PUBLIC BUT THEY INCLUDE SO-CALLED "FALL-BACK" PAY WHICH IS A FORM OF SUPPLEMENT TO UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT, INCREASED SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES AND OTHER FRINGE BENEFITS. ONE OF THE ORIGINAL DEMANDS OF THE SEAMEN FOR PAYMENT OF "CAPTIVE TIME", THAT IS FOR COMPENSATION TO THEM FOR TIME THEY MUST SPEND ON BOARD SHIP IN PORT AWAITING ORDERS TO WORK, WAS RESISTED BY THE EMPLOYERS. HIGHER "FALL-BACK" PAY AND TIME OFF IN PLACE OF "CAPTIVE TIME" ARE REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED INSTEAD. THESE FRINGE BENEFITS. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED. ARE IN ADDITION TO THE PAY INCREASE TO WHICH THE SEAMEN WILL BE ENTITLED IN JANUARY UNDER THE PRESENT WAGE POLICY. (AVERAGING 4 1/2 PERCENT).

3. THE SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE HAS, OF COURSE, AWARDED OFF WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A REALLY DAMAGING STRIKE. ESPECIALLY IN ITS EFFECT ON THE TUC-GOVERNMENT PAY-TAX ACCORD, WHICH IS A MAJOR ASPECT OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT. TUC GENERAL SECRETARY LEN MURRAY SAID HE WELCOMED THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND ADDED: "THIS SETTLEMENT IN NO WAY REPRESENTS A RELAXATION OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT."

4. IT IS HOPED THAT MURRAY'S OPTIMISM WILL BE JUSTIFIED. HOWEVER, SOME OBSERVERS OF THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SCENE IN BRITAIN BELIEVE THAT THE SEAMEN'S SETTLEMENT COULD LEAD TO DEMANDS BY OTHER UNIONS FOR SIMILAR TREATMENT. AMONG SOME OF THE UNIONS WHICH ARE RAISING THE ISSUE OF "ME-TOO" TREATMENT ARE THOSE IN RAILWAY, ENGINEERING, MINING INDUSTRIES AND CIVIL SERVICE AND POLICE UNIONS. APART FROM THE FACT THAT SOME UNIONS WERE CAUGHT IN THE SAME WAY AS THE SEAMEN -- BETWEEN PAY RESTRAINT POLICIES -- MANY UNIONS MAY NOW ARGUE THAT THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE WORK ENTITLES THEM TO SPECIAL FRINGE BENEFIT TREATMENT. AN OFFICIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE ADVISORY CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION SERVICE WITH WHOM WE SPOKE TODAY SAID THAT "THE SEAMEN'S UNION SETTLEMENT WILL CAUSE LOT OF HEADACHES FOR THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE NEXT SIX MONTHS."

ARMSTRONG

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## Message Attributes

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